a plurality of subgroup labels, each of which identifies a set of related option controls and each of which has only one state: not selected;

a controller configured to receive from a user-input device a single action associated with an option control and toggle the state of this associated option control without affecting the selection state of any other option control;

whereby a user can see at a glance which subgroups and options are available and thus more quickly locate relevant options, and whereby a user can see at a glance which options are currently selected, making searches faster and easier.

26. The system recited in claim 25 wherein every option control is visible when the entire system is visible, whether or not the system itself is currently selected.

27. The system recited in claim 25 wherein the single action is a click on a mouse button, a tap on a trackpad or equivalent action.

28. The system recited in claim 25 wherein the single action is a key press such as on the space bar or enter key.

29. The system recited in claim 25 wherein the subgroups indicated by the subgroup labels are arranged in a horizontal fashion as a single row, with each subgroup occupying a single column.

30. The system recited in claim 25 wherein the subgroups indicated by the subgroup labels are arranged as a set of rows and columns.

31. The system recited in claim 25 wherein each option control is a checkbox.

32. A search system comprising:

a subsystem for viewing and selecting multiple options for a single data element, the subsystem comprising:

a plurality of option controls, each of which has two visually distinct states: selected and not selected;

a plurality of option labels;

a plurality of subgroup labels, each of which identifies a set of related option controls and each of which has only one state: not selected;

a controller configured to receive from a user-input device a single action associated with an option control and toggle the state of this associated option control without affecting the selection state of any other option control;

an information location mechanism coupled to a data repository containing a plurality of data objects, said information location mechanism being configured to receive search criteria in a predetermined syntax, search the data repository, and retrieve zero or more data objects that conform to the search criteria;

a formatting engine to format the search results from said information location mechanism; and

a client process and visual display unit to display the search form, the formatted search results and the action trigger.

33. A method for viewing and selecting multiple options for a single data element, the method comprising:

displaying a plurality of option controls, each of which has two visually distinct states: selected and not selected;

displaying a plurality of option labels;

displaying a plurality of subgroup labels, each of which identifies a set of related option controls and each of which has only one state: not selected;